

Yet Tartarus Remains

The GM Papers

A Roleplaying Module

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Introduction

[...] the goddess fierce Echidna who is half a nymph with glancing eyes and fair cheeks, and half again a huge snake, great and awful, with speckled skin, eating raw flesh beneath the secret parts of the holy earth. And there she has a cave deep down under a hollow rock far from the deathless gods and mortal men. There, then, did the gods appoint her a glorious house to dwell in: and she keeps guard in Arima beneath the earth, grim Echidna, a nymph who dies not nor grows old all her days.

Hesiod, Theogony, 295-305

The year is 1948. World War II has recently ended and Europe is in the middle of rebuilding — physically, economically, and socially. The war has interrupted life through the whole continent, but now, with the return of peace, projects that have been abandoned are once again being taken up.

The *Department of Archeology and Antiquities* at Princeton University has sent a small team to perform field work at the Acropolis Achlys on the small island of Kleitos in the Aegean Sea, a few hours off the coast of Greece (and part of the Hellenic Republic). Unfortunately, this team has disappeared, and now what has happened to them needs to be discovered.

The Rules

Basic Rule Mechanics

The game is only played with 3d6s.

The basic mechanic is simple: every action that something important depends on and that is non-trivial should probably be rolled for. Choose one of the character's attributes (innate abilities) or skills (learned abilities). The player rolls 3d6, sums up the value, and if it is less than or equal to the score, they **succeed**.

A roll of 3 or 4 is a **critical success**. Have something extra good happen.

A roll of 17 or 18 is a **critical failure**. Have something bad happen. The gun jams. The radio shorts.

Health and Fatigue

People will generally fall unconscious and be in need of medical assistance at 0 HP. You can have them make HT checks to see if they die when their HP is negative. Apply fatigue when people are physically pushing hard. Unconsciousness occurs at 0 fatigue. Hit points and fatigue are both filled up while sleeping.

Roll Difficulty

A roll of standard difficulty has a player roll against a skill or attribute. If you want to make a roll easier, have them roll at their skill+n, and at their skill-n for greater difficulty (where n is a small value, like 1 or 2 or 3 — larger values like 5 can be used for extremely difficult actions).

Handling Language

Language is tricky. Giles is the only fluent speaker of modern Greek in the party, while everyone else will have a varying degree of functional knowledge. In *some* situations it may be appropriate to penalize players when interacting with people, but do be careful with this, as being too heavy handed with it can heavily break game-play.

The Story

*[...]She seem'd, at once, some penanced lady elf,
Some demon's mistress, or the demon's self.
Upon her crest she wore a wannish fire
Sprinkled with stars, like Ariadne's tiar:
Her head was serpent, but ah, bitter-sweet!
She had a woman's mouth with all its pearls complete:
And for her eyes: what could such eyes do there
But weep, and weep, that they were born so fair?
As Proserpine still weeps for her Sicilian air.
Her throat was serpent, but the words she spake
Came, as through bubbling honey[...]*

John Keats, Lamia

It is 1948, and Dr. James Templeton leads an archaeological survey to the island of Kleitos in the Aegean Sea. This is small, mostly rural island, and he is looking for evidence of the Oracle of Echidna, a god that seems to not have had many cults directly worshiping her. Kleitos is rumored to home the only Oracle known to belong to Echidna.

The expedition focuses on two areas of the island: the port and fishing town of **Magnisias**, and the ruins of the **Acropolis Achlys**, which stands on a hilltop at island's center. Both Magnisias and Achlys are ancient, and have been in use for millennia. Achlys, however, was abandoned centuries ago, and now lies in ruins. Magnisias has seen continual use through the centuries, and is a fairly modern, if small and socially constrained, fishing village that lacks most modern amenities.

While Magnisias is small, the team manage to **rent a house** for their use in the town. But Templeton quickly decided that anything of archaeological value in Magnisias will be hidden under centuries of building, and any excavation would be difficult. He and his team quickly move on to Achlys, where they set up a **forward camp** in the agora (an open-space, public meeting area).

Achlys stands in the uninhabited central portion of the island, and the ruins lay on top of a hill. This was a small, ancient Greek metropolis. Over the course of the next

few months, Templeton and his team map out the various temples, baths, and buildings. With some sleuth work they discover what is believed to be the remains of the **Oracle of Echidna**, close to Acropolis's agora.

1. Dr. James Templeton, expedition lead.
2. Dr. Grace Ackerman
3. Brett Hill
4. William 'Bill' Vincent, 19, first year graduate student.

Table 1: Members of the 1948 Expedition

The team then focuses exclusively on the Oracle, setting up a standard archaeological grid, excavation nets, and so on. A few months in to their excavation work they discover a door hidden by collapsed stone. Once the door has been cleared of rubble, they break through using picks, chisels and hammers, and discover a well preserved basement area that was clearly a **collection of tombs**: a central area of cobbled and dressed stone leading off into ante-chambers containing fine pottery, weapons, and ash-urns. One of these ante-chambers, however, contained a grave. Templeton begins to excavate the grave, but what he discovers shocks him: the skeletal remains of what appears to be some **snake-human chimera**, a creature with the

head and torso of a person, and the tail of a snake. Whatever this creature was, it had been interred and treated with respect, here at the Oracle. The creature's flesh has been petrified, leaving behind grotesque stone resembling an over-detailed gargoyle, hiding the nature of bone and interior anatomy.

Templeton spends some time photographing these remains. Knowing the importance of their find and how under-resourced his small team is, they secure the find under canvas and return to their house in Magnisias. Templeton **types a letter** explaining his find, and gives it to **Achaikos**, a fisherman, to take to the University of Athens, along with a roll of **620 film** from the photographs taken of the site and remains. He uses the **short-wave radio** he has in the team's house to inform the Archeology Department at the University of Athens of the find, and of the incoming letter, both to be communicated to Princeton University.

The team agrees to keep their find a secret in order to protect their find. However, **William 'Bill' Vincent** has been romantically and intimately involved with another teenager, **Ilithyia**. He has been in the habit of discussing all the group's findings with her, since she seems to be desperately interested in their doings. And indeed, she is: her and her family are members of the **Ward of Arima**, an ancient Cult originally from ancient Persia, but now based almost exclusively on the island of Kleitos. She has been reporting everything told to her by the unaware graduate student, Bill Vincent, to her father, **Panteleimon**. In his excitement, Bill tells her about the find.

The next day the team return to their forward base at the Achlys agora, where they are set upon by an armed group of the Ward of Arima, who **open fire on them** while they are in their tent. Templeton, however, was outside, contemplating the corpse. Alerted by the gunshots, he **manages to escape** and elude his pursuers.

The Ward then **take the bodies and dispose of them** at the old quarry, weighting them with stones and sending them to the bottom of the small lake that has formed in the quarry's center.

The Ward then return to the team's house in Magnisias. They force the lock, and thoroughly search the place, trashing what they find. They trash the short-wave wireless off the table, and **sacrifice a goat** on it, in honor of Echidna, the god that they worship. They eat portions of its flesh while raw, and leave the note written in Arabic. It should be noted that all the members of the Ward that remain on the island are of Greek descent.

Of course, when **Demetrios** and **Phoibe Patsatzoglou** discover the state of their house. A search is organized, and continues long enough to discover the state of their tent. But then **Joachim Georgiadis**, a fisherman, returns to the island, saying that he had been woken in the middle of the night to transport the archaeologists to the mainland.

Because of this reported trip, the limited island police (all two members of the Hellenic Police) stop the search, and soon after stop the search for possible vandalism suspects.

The state of affairs

Templeton is on the island. There is no easy means of communication off the island with anyone that does not involve contacting people, and he isn't sure who is involved with the attack on him and his team.

The Ward transport the bodies by cart donkey and cart to the quarry, and **Templeton tails them** there, and watches them dispose of the body, although they first **feast on the corpses**, in the quarry's seclusion, eating the raw flesh and singing and dancing into the morning. From this he realizes that these are members of a strange cult.

He follows **Panteleimon**, who he believes to be the ringleader home, and waylays him in the streets. Capturing him, he takes him into the wilderness, and tortures him, discovering the existence of both the Ward, the Ward's history and purpose, the existence of the Book of the Dead in its original Arabic form, known as the **Al Azif**, and

the existence of the **gateway to Arima**, Echidna's home, which lies far beneath the Earth.

The gateway lies on a sea-side cliff, and so out of eyesight of most people. The Ward keep a single guard at the gate, which is a large stone gate, carved with various monsters, Cerebus, the Hydra, the Chimera, who are the children of Echidna

He then attacks and kills the guard, and blows the gate off of its hinges using the dynamite. He then descends into the darkness, in search of the book.

Little does Templeton know that the book is a gateway to madness.

The Players

The player characters are provided genderless, with only an initial, surname, and academic title. The players are free to gender their characters and to provide fuller names. Below are notes on the characters, including important things to take note of from their character sheets.

- **Bowen**

Bowen's archetype is the fighter. They feel free to apply intimidation, force and violence as appropriate.

They have **absolute direction**, allowing them to always know what direction they are facing. They suffer from **fighting fatigue**: at the end of a violent encounter they begin to shake. All physical actions are at -2 for the next hour, although a successful will roll will temporarily negate this. Have them roll will after combat: on a failed roll they throw up violently.

- **Singh**

Singh's archetype is a healer. They come with a wide range of medical knowledge and have a range of first aid items.

Singh can **heal**: they can make a successful first-aid roll to heal a character by 1d-2 hit points. This takes 30 minutes of game time to perform. Singh also has a **phobia of blood**: when they see blood, all their actions are performed at -2. A successful will roll negates this for a *individual* actions. The first time that they see blood, they need to make a will roll: if failed, they need to immediately move out of sight of the blood, and make a successful will roll to return to that location.

Singh also has the following items:

- An ampule of morphine, with 4 uses
- An ampule of epinephrine, with 4 uses.
- An ampule of elephant tranquillizer, with 2 uses.
- Assorted simple drugs: paracetamol, caffeine, &c.

The medical bag provides a +2 to physician and first-aid rolls. The ampule of morphine temporarily heals someone for 1d health points. The extra health points last for an hour. The epinephrine temporarily fills a character's fatigue for one hour. The tranquillizer will put almost anything to sleep for an hour if they fail an HT check at -3. The simple drugs should have limited game-play affect, except for what you allow them to get away with.

Repeated use of a drug does not stack its affects!

- **Wrona**

Is the fast-talker of the group. They can figure out if people are lying by making a successful psychology roll, and to be able to lie to them in turn using acting.

They are **empathic**: whenever they meet someone, they can ask you to make an IQ roll at -2. If successful, provide some general impressions on the person they meet, such as whether they're being truthful (but not what the truth is), are the suspicious sort, and so on. On a failure, lie. Wrona also suffers from **nightmares** whenever they sleep. On a failed will roll they suffer 1 FP damage that can only be recovered through sleep. On a critical failure, they awake shaken, and all rolls that day are at -1.

If Wrona studies their copy of the **I-Ching** for *an hour*, they may take a +1 bonus to any one roll in the following 24 hours. They also can create a **word of warning**, which provides +2 to perception checks to notice if someone has entered an area that they are currently present in. This bonus also applies during sleep. Environmental penalties still apply. If Wrona can't perceive the person, they shouldn't get a perception check.

Wrona knows about the Book of the Dead, and would almost certainly like to find it.

- **Giles**

Giles is the sage. He has the power of **prophecy**: once a night you can feed them prophetic statements from the attached prophecy sheet. Feel free to make up appropriate ones as well. Note that during the trip to Kleitos, their prophetic visions are of being trapped underground, in darkness, with a heavy weight pressing down on them. They have an **eidetic memory**: you and the players should provide any details of things that they have experienced

and ask for reminders about. Giles also suffers from a **phobia of the dark**: all actions are at -2 while they are in a dark space, and at -1 while they have a light.

Giles has also had a dream about the alter at the Oracle: they believe that it contains an artifact of holy power to Nyx.

The Plot

From the Heliconian Muses let us begin to sing [...]

Hesiod, Theogony, 1

This section discusses the course of play. Play begins on a small boat just outside of Magnisias town. The events are fairly free-form, although there are many suggestions later on how to handle the game's pacing. There is a large amount of backstory on the character sheets, a small amount of sequenced scenes at the opening of play, a collection of optional and unsequenced scenes to use as you will, and some ending scenes.

A Quick Word on the State of Magnisias

With Templeton's blasting of the gate to Arima, various creatures have begun to return to the island. The most important of these are the snakelike **lamia / drakaina**, which have the torsos of a woman and a serpentine body. These creatures have been skulking about, **occasionally attacking people** at night, stealing them away into the nests that they have been building for themselves around the island.

The lamia have also been **occasionally stealing babies and children**, since these are by far the easier catches.

There have also been **mild earthquakes** throughout the island, which has not happened before in anyone's recollection. This, again, is tied to Templeton, to the magics he is using in Arima, and his attempt to awaken Echidna. The **tremors have been worsening**, and people worry that it will rip the island apart.

All of this, of course, keeps people off of the streets at night. It has also **caused many of the island's inhabitants to leave**.

On Time Constraints

Let Bowen, who has some knowledge of geology, realize that the tremors and earthquakes are not a good sign. They should do this some time after landing, or, if you forget, have a tremor occur at any moment that you feel the party needs a time constraint. At the tremor's occurrence, inform Bowen that they're worried about the tremors: the island, they think, is likely to be inundated by Tsunami if these tremors continue to worsen. They have only a matter of days in order to finish what they want to do on the island.

Prof Jenkins
Department of Archeology and Antiquities
Princeton University
Princeton, New Jersey
USA

Dr. James Templeton
Kleitos Island
c/o Demetrios Patsatzoglou, Magnisias Town

Dear Gregory,

I hope this letter finds you well.

We have made an amazing discovery! A week ago we found the petrified remains of the strangest creature buried in the tomb region of the Oracle: a chimera of sorts, some blend of snake and human, like the lamia or drakaina of mythology. We estimate it to be perhaps 6.5 ft in length, perhaps 7, although how high it stood (if indeed it could even stand), we do not know.

I've attached photographs. As you can see, the corpse is still firmly embedded in the matrix.

Send us a paleontologist who feels confident that they can safely exhume this thing. Dr Singh of Columbia University is my recommendation, but I leave the decision up to you.

All the best,

James Templeton

Note 1: Letter, from James Templeton to Gregory Jenkins

Backstory

Of note:

- Prof. Jenkins provides the players with \$1000 (150 000 Drachma) to purchase equipment as they see fit.
- This backstory is given to the players on their character sheets.

After being contacted by Professor Gregory Jenkins, the head of Princeton University's department of Archeology and Antiquities, the players are brought out

Beware the darkness from which they climb. Seekers will be watched.

Note 2: A letter in Arabic. The right edge is stained a rusty brown.

for a meet and greet at the department. Soon they find themselves in Prof. Jenkins's lavish third floor office.

Prof. Jenkins is an old man close to 70. He walks slowly, with an obvious limp, and supports himself with an ornate cane. His office is fairly luxurious, with a large, solid wooden desk sitting in front of the windows. Various antiquities decorate the office: pottery in glass cabinets, statues great and small on desks and shelves, weapons and armor hang on display. Most of the artifacts appear to be Greek, or related to Greek mythology.

After passing out drinks (whiskey, coffee and tea), Prof. Jenkins explains the work that he has brought you together for.

A few months ago, **Dr James Templeton** from the department led an expedition to explore the ruins of the **Acropolis Achlys** on **Kleitos Island**, one of the Greek islands in the Aegean sea. Achlys was rumored to have once been the home to one of the darker mystery cults that had built a community for itself around the **Oracle of Echidna**, who was one of the chthonic Greek gods, a nymph who was often called the **Mother of all Monsters**. This was the only known Oracle to the god, and Templeton had reported that his team had found the ruins and begun the excavation work.

"Three months ago," Jenkins says, "James sent this letter and a roll of 620 film, which I've had developed" He hands you note 1.

"As you can see," he says, "we're in need of a paleontologist. **Dr Singh**, well, you were James's first choice. And so here you are. Your work on the reconstruction of the *Hypacrosaurus altispinus* specimen was really quite exemplary. And surely there will be a paper in this Kleitos work as well, a first description of a possibly new class or even phylum of the animal kingdom." Jenkins takes out a collection of large, black

and white photographs. They show the petrified specimen still half buried in sediment.

Singh notices that the chimera appears as described in the letter: a strange mixture of reptilian lower body and mammalian upper body. The image is too poor to tell if this is merely a biological abnormality or not, or even a fake — but if this is not a fake, then surely it will be one of the most important finds in recent history, and enough to not only raise Singh's fading star, but likely keep their name in the limelights. "This is definitely not of any known class of animal," Singh inform the group.

The enclosing matrix looks like limestone, though, which can be as hard as concrete. Bowen let the group know how that Templeton was wise to look for help in excavating his find.

"Unfortunately," Prof. Jenkins says, "there have been complications, which necessitates us sending a larger group of people, a second expedition, if you will." It seems that the letter was the last communication with Dr. Templeton and his team. He has not responded to any further written communication, nor to any radio communiques. A group from the *University of Athens* had visited the island to look for the team, but found the team's rented house on the island abandoned, ransacked, and covered in blood. The local police had said that the body of a half eaten goat had been found on their kitchen table, and that the team was suspected of being involved in some dark cult.

Worse, the team's camp at the Acropolis was full of bullet holes, which the police explained as being the by product of a populous keen on chasing the archaeologists from the island. No bodies have been found, and a fisherman had reported that the archaeologists had hired him to transport them to Athens. The local police have assumed that Templeton and his team left the island of their own free will.

The teams current whereabouts are unknown — if they had even reached Athens at all.

"This is an important find, not only to the University, but to the scientific community at large. It might not only shift our understanding of animal biology and evolutionary history, but of our own history. And so I want the four of you to go to Kleitos, secure the find, and to reach the bottom of whatever the hell is happening on that island."

"**Dr Bowen**, you have, um —" and here Jenkins seems a bit uncomfortable, "— a reputation. As a bit of a maverick, with a good feeling for violence and when to

employ it. And while I hope those skills won't be required, we need someone like you to help secure the site, ensure the safety of the team members, and to lead the investigation into what happened to Dr. Templeton and his team on the island. If they're still on the island, find them if you can. If they've met an untimely demise, inform the authorities."

"**Professor Giles**, why I asked you hear is pretty straight forward. Your knowledge of ancient Greek history, language and mythology is unsurpassed. Your translation of Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey* are standards works in our undergraduate courses. This, and you're, um, devotion to Nyx will provide insights into the minds of any possible cultists on the island. And I understand that you're also fairly familiar with Arabic, yes?" Jenkins hands Giles note 2.

Giles takes the letter. It's written in a combination of classical and modern standard Arabic, and they easily read the translation out to the group. "I can't say I recognize or understand the reference, though."

Dr. Wrona speaks up: "Beware the darkness from which they climb. That's a reference from the Book of the Dead, an occult text."

"The Book of the Dead?" Jenkins says. "I haven't heard of it. But that is why I want you here, **Dr. Wrona** — your studies in the occult intrigue me. We seem to have some cultist group involved in this, and your studies in the mind of the cultist and the superstitious might come in useful. I was hoping that you and Professor Giles could determine what cult activities Dr. Templeton was involved in, and to support Dr. Bowen in uncovering the truth of Dr Templeton and his lost team."

Sequenced Scenes

These scenes should happen as described, in the order described. Play begins with scene 1, with the players on **Joachim Georgiadis's** boat. Note that Joachim is the fisherman the Ward had paid to pretend to transport the archaeologists. This allows the players to describe themselves and get off the ground with some descriptions of the island from a residence, and possibly a small interrogation scene.

Next is a flashback scene that runs as they're unloading their belongings: this scene should be short, and allows the players a chance to question Prof. Gregory Jenkins. The players can also specify what equipment they purchased in Athens, like tents, pickaxes, and so on (which is what they're now unloading).

Scene 1: Arriving in Mist

Things to look out for in this scene:

- The ruins are set up as something looming over the island
- The current state of Magnisias is introduced
- The players have a chance to describe themselves
- The players meet **Joachim Georgiadis**, and have a chance to question him.

The team arrive in the early hours of the evening, on a small fishing vessel that feels far too small to be carrying four people and **Joachim Georgiadis**, the fisherman, who has brought everyone in from Athens. **Joachim Georgiadis** lives on the island, and doesn't seem happy to be returning to it. Things have been stressful, he says, since he had transported the archaeologists off the island. The dark practices that they've been up to have left their mark on the people of Magnisias, and if he'd known what they had been up to, he says, he would have thrown them overboard instead of letting them disembark in Athens.

Magnisias is a glitter of lights on a hillside as the team approaches: ships have mostly docked, and some of these also have lanterns on them. The port seems quiet, though, and built for a larger fleet of ships. Unknown to the players, many people have left Magnisias, at least temporarily, until the disappearances and strange occurrences die down.

In the distance and the gloaming one can just make out the ruins of Achlys looming over the island, although are hidden from view as the boat approaches the port, and Magnisias towers around it.

Joachim will willingly answer some basic questions while he's delivering the team to port, but he knows little about the archaeologists:

- The state of the town, which is that *lamia* / *drakaina* have returned to steal children away.
- Thoughts on the archaeologists, which is that they were cultists, and stealing their treasures.
- Can confirm who the archaeologists have been staying with.
- That he had transported them to Athens. He says that they had seemed anxious, and he can surely understand why, considering what they'd been up to.
- He does not actually know what they had been up to, apart from the stories of the sacrifice in their house.

Joachim guides his boat into a berth and begins to secure it. On the opposite side of the berth are **Patrikos and Iva**, who are packing their sailing boat with boxes and bags brought by a donkey. The cart partly blocks the berth, and the players need to squeeze around it to get past. They have a baby in the cart, who's crying. Patrikos and Iva are packing their belongings and going to live in Athens for some months until children stop disappearing here.

A storm is coming in. It will rain the whole night, a slow, steady rain.

If the players question Joachim, see the *Scene: Questioning Joachim Georgiadis*.

Scene 2: A Flashback of Athens, and Princeton University

This should occur while the players are unloading. It provides the players with a chance to question Jenkins when he has called them together (and hence happens partially in his office at Princeton University). Ask the players, as they prepare to disembark if they had any questions for the Professor.

Possible questions:

- **Who do we meet on the island?** “The letter is in the care of **Demetrios Patsatzoglou**, who is the owner of the house. We have paid for use of the house for at least another seven months.”
- **Why are the police not involved?** “They were involved, but concluded that our team had left the island and are on the mainland somewhere.”
- **What did the police think about the shooting, ransacking and blood?** “They came to the conclusion that the team were involved in cultist activities.”
- **Where they involved in cultist activities?** “Not that I'm aware of. I always knew James as a good Christian, although I can't speak for the undergraduates he took with him. But James is a good judge of character.”

After that, inform the players that they had spent some time in Athens possibly buying equipment with the \$1000 / 150 000 Drachma that the Department had provided, and ask what it is that they purchased, and are now unpacking from the ship. If play time is not an issue, the purchasing scene can offer some great roleplaying chances, but can be easily limited if time is an issue.

Possible Scenes

The following scenes may occur when the players bring their characters to the appropriate places, or meet the appropriate people. These scenes may occur in any order, or not at all. Feel free to improvise when and where they happen.

Scene: Questioning the Police

Adrastos Doukakis and **Lysander Zorbas**, the local police officers, both ran the investigation of the missing archaeologists. They have come to the conclusion that the archaeologists had been involved in a cult, due to the sacrificial goat found in their residence. They had also come to the conclusion that the archaeological team had left the island of their own free will, to Athens, because of the testimony of **Joachim Georgiadis**, a fisherman, who reportedly took them to the mainland in the middle of the night. The archaeologists had reportedly seemed disturbed, and perhaps drunk. The attack on the tent was, of course, boisterous locals who have discovered the archeologists' cultist leanings, and were attempting to chase them off.

Scene: Questioning Joachim Georgiadis

Joachim Georgiadis is the fisherman who reported taking the team to the mainland, to Athens specifically. The team had known him had often bought fish and so on from him, which is how they met.

His story is this: that one night, there had been banging at his door that woke him up. This was late, midnight perhaps. Of course, he opened, and it was Dr Templeton and his team. They wanted immediate transport to the mainland, and paid him 50 Drachma for the transport. He isn't sure where they went to.

The truth is this, **Panteleimon** from the Ward had approached him to go out to the mainland, and to come back in to town and spread word at the Ambrosial Cup (the town bar) that he had just delivered the team to the mainland.

Scene: Hunting the Drakaina

When speaking to people around the Magnisias, you will hear people say that children have been taken. This is true. This is also the reason why so many people have left the town. They fear that the Lamia have returned, the Drakaina, half serpent, half woman.

A Drakaina / Lamia does haunt the streets at night. The streets are near abandoned, and the players may wonder it, hearing strange sounds and trying to discover what they are. Sooner or later, though, they will hear something following them. Something that comes closer and closer.

Or perhaps they hear a scream, and when they go to investigate the find a women running off with a child, the mother laying in the street, still conscious but bleeding heavily from many bites to her arms. When the players give chase, the woman

carrying the child will begin to transform, in the hazy way that something may in a dream, into a snakelike creature.

The lamia are described in the chapter, *Characters and Other Entities*.

Scene: Being Followed

The **Ward of Arima** are following the players. They are worried that what the previous archaeologists were up to awaken things that should not be awoken, and Templeton had been asking questions about the book, **Al Azif**, more commonly known as the **Book of the Dead**.

And so the Ward always have people following the players. This will be difficult to notice during the day, on the streets. During the day, in Magnisias, a streetwise check of -4 is needed in order for the team to notice that they have tail. While the players are in town, you may have them occasionally make perception rolls: if they succeed, inform the players that they have a feeling that they're being watched, but they can't tell by whom. Allow them to make a streetwise check to find their followers.

Outside the town, no streetwise checks are needed, and just a straight perception check vs a stealth of 12.

Feel free to reward inventive techniques used to locate the tail.

The tail is **Lykaios Konstantinou**, she is 22, and studied on the mainland to be a dancer before returning to the village to help her parents, who are old and and infirm. She is a member of the Ward, but will not willingly admit this. Lykaios understands that the Ward is worried that the group will be up to the strange, cult practices that their previous counterparts were. What exactly those practices were, she could not say. She was asked to merely watch and keep track of these people. She does believe that the previous team had found something in the ruins, although exactly what she is not sure.

Scene: The Ward Attacks

This scene should occur after the scene has either visited the Acropolis and not noticed the tail, or any time after the tail has been noticed.

Essentially, members of the Ward ambush / attack the players in an attempt to capture them. Six people will be attacking the group. They will in the most part be using non-lethal means of attack: fists and truncheons. Be sure to point this out. If any players escalate to firearms, the Ward members themselves will do so as well, pulling out pistols and knives. Only one of them is armed with a pistol, however.

The Ward members will attempt to withdraw if they receive serious injuries. These people are not blood thirsty fighters, but cultists scared for their families. If chased, they will attempt to hole themselves up, perhaps in the **Ambrosial Cup**, or even (and accidentally), at **Joachim Georgiadis's** house. It might be useful to have them attempt to hide at any location you find useful to point the players towards the Ward.

As the attack starts, the players may or may not have much time to prepare, depending on how surprised they are. Even if they have time, be sure to push them: the attackers are coming, and this is a tense moment.

If the attack is successful, or even partly successful, the captured players are taken to the **Old Cottage**, which is the Ward's central location, and where they store their holy texts.

Some attack options:

- If the team is staying at the **residence**, they may break in to the residence and attempt to attack them there. Perhaps allow a player the chance to hear them and wake (perception check, perhaps a health check too if they are very tired).
- If the team is staying at the **Ambrosial Cup**, the owner will let the Ward in. Again, perhaps someone in the team hears them coming up the stairs.
- Attacks them at night, at the Acropolis, as they sleep in the team's **forward camp**. Perhaps combine with the the *Optional Scene: Staying the Night at the Agora*.

The attackers:

- Tito Karatasos
- Uriania Doukakis
- Kris Anagnostopoulos
- Letha Papakostas
- Arista Afxentiou
- Argus Afxentiou

You should give the attackers base-stats of 10, all around, to simplify game-play. They do 1d-2 damage with their fists, and 1d damage with their truncheons. The truncheons may optionally do fatigue damage. Once a character's fatigue is 0, they are unconscious. Tito Karatasos has the gun, which does 2d -1 damage.

Scene: Escape from the Old Cottage

The players, when captured, are bound, gagged, and transported in a cart drawn by two mules to **Artemis Lake** and the **Old Cottage**. There they are locked in one of the bedrooms at the cottage. A guard sits on a chair just outside of their locked door. Their belongings are taken from them and kept on a table in the study below.

The room's windows have been nailed shut, and a perception check allows the players to hear the guard outside the door gently snoring.

Krito (see the description of the cottage in the locations below) will come, with a guard of his own, to question the team. He wants to know their purpose on the island, and what they know of **Echidna** and **Tartarus** and **Typhon**, and **Al Azif**. Players might have to make an acting check in order to not have their interest discovered, and then questioned.

If the players cannot escape, they will eventually be taken to the chapel, under guard. There they will be strapped with leather straps to iron racks placed on the ground, and eaten alive by the members of the Ward.

While the players are escaping, they will hear chanting begin in the chapel. This is the beginning of a ceremony that will end with the ritual consumption of a living goat.

Scene: Bodies are Found

There is a commotion in town, out on the street. If the players are at the Ambrosial Cup, perhaps someone comes running in. This is the child Nikolai, who was playing at the abandoned quarry. He has found a badly eaten and rotten corpse in the water: one of the buried bodies has come loose, and floated to the surface.

Optional Scenes

The following scenes are completely optional, but you might find them useful to add excitement.

Optional Scene: Staying the Night at the Agora (or Oracle)

You can hear something moving outside. In the shadows. This is some strange creature, a spider-like cephalopod, noticing the team's movements, investigating, keeping its distance until it finds a weak spot. If no one investigates, you hear the distant snuffling and grunting, followed by silence and footsteps beside the tent. Later in the night something inhuman screams: this is the cephalopod's kill.

Optional Scene: Attacked in the Tombs

Something has moved in to the tombs, into the darkness. It attacks.

Optional Scene: Drinking the Well Water

This provides one random prophecy to whoever drinks it.

Ending Scenes

These are some of the possible ways to end the game.

Scene: Breaching the Gateway and Finding Templeton

Beyond the gateway lies Arima, Echidna's home. The passageway will just seem long and endless, and the players will be able to march for days, unless the Book of the Dead or some other occult source is used to "open" it. Any ritual in the Book of the Dead will require an animal sacrifice to be made.

Once this is done, they will reach a city carved out of rock in the center of the Earth. This is Arima. It appears abandoned, and it is. Because Echidna lays here, slumbering. At the center of this abandoned city lies a giant domed temple. Here Echidna, the serpent beast, she who has Typhon as her consort, sleeps on her throne. She is gargantuan, towering over the players. At her feet is a makeshift altar of loose stone, resting upon it is Al Azif, and it is open.

Templeton sits cross-legged, reading from the book. He is completely naked and caked in dirt. If the characters speak to him, they will discover that he has lost his mind, and has only one thought left: to awaken Echidna and meet a god.

As the players approach, Echidna growls and hisses and appears disturbed in her sleep. Have the players reached Templeton before she is awakened?

Echidna will very likely want to use the book herself to breach the gates into Tartarus: then her consort, Typhon, the most terrible of all monsters, will be released upon the world, as will the imprisoned Titans, and the other monsters trapped within the pit Tartarus.

Scene: Leaving the Island

If the players leave Kleitos prematurely, let them know that a few days after they have left the island collapses inwards upon itself, and is swallowed up by the sea. Giles knows, in their dreams, that whatever was slumbering beneath the Earth has awoken: Echidna has breached Tartarus.

Locations

Kleitos Island

This is the area in which most of the action takes place. **The players will begin at the port** of the town Magnisias, unless they have somehow organized to be dropped of somewhere else. The players should generally be free to move around as they wish.

Kleitos can be thought of as being divided into three sections. There is only one town on the island, which lies to the south. This is **Magnisias**, an old town that has seen use as a fishing and port village since antiquity. In the island's center lies the **Acropolis Achlys**, on its hilltop. There are a few other outlying areas, of special important being the abandoned quarry.

There is no electricity on the island, and buildings are lit with candles and lamps, fires and stoves.

Inland, distant, but looming over everything, are the **ruins of Achlys**. They stand on Kleitos hill, and are often obscured. The ruins are visible as one comes in to the port, but hidden by the bulk of Magnisias and the hill that it is crowded on.

Magnisias

This is an old Greek fishing village. It sits on the island slope, and is tiers of cobbled roads and stone and plaster buildings, level on top of level until it reaches the island plateau. The bottom of the village is the harbor and port for fishing vessels. The buildings tend to be two stories high, although there are single floor and three floor buildings as well. Often the ground floor is made of unplastered dry stone, while the upper floor will be plastered and white-washed. People well off buildings will be plastered throughout, the poorer ones not. Roofs are made of uneven, hand-baked tiles. The windows are glass, and shuttered, but in the poorer places the shutters may hang at angles, and the plaster may have worn away, or discolored.

Donkeys roam even the narrowest streets, and are nimble beasts of burden. Carts are used only in the wider ones, although in the higher regions the streets can be fairly wide. Chimneys are everywhere, as is the smell of wood smoke.

The Port

Magnisias port takes up the lower street of the village. The quay is made up mostly the stone pier, where the larger berths are of stone as well, and the smaller ones are wooden. Most of the ships here are small fishing vessels, some only large enough for two or three people, but others may take a small crew and remain out at sea for days. The smaller ones are often sailing vessels, but there are also some motorized vessels are not rare.

The port is where the players will likely disembark.

The Team Residence

This is a double story building in Magnisias that the team has been renting since they arrived on the island three months ago. The owners of the house are **Demetrios** and **Phoibe Patsatzoglou**, and they have moved in with other family so that the archaeologists could have this space.

The house is half way up the hillside, and off to the west side of the town; the roads are larger here than down at the port, and since the house is not on a main thoroughfare, the area is quite quiet.

A large tree grows outside the house, providing shade in summer, and some cover from the rain now in winter.

The house is not the best kept house: some shutters don't close well, and a good breeze comes in from under the door.

The first time that the team visit the house, they will find it locked. The villagers will happily direct everyone to where Demetrios and Phoibe currently live, though, with some of Phoibe's cousins closer to the harbor.

Phoibe will come along with them, to unlock, and hand over the keys, and describe what it is that they had been found there. The sacrifice and trashing of the house had happened nearly four months ago by the time the team arrives on the island, so much has changed and been disturbed.

The front door opens into passageway that leads to stairs upwards. A door on the left opens into the kitchen, another door on the right to the living room. The kitchen is large, and someone has cleaned it. Everything is neat and in its place. A kitchen table sits in the middle of the room, and the wood has been stained a dark brown by blood. This, Phoibe tells them, is where the body of the goat had been found. It had been

skinned and jointed, and its flesh eaten. It's blood had been scattered around each of the rooms, although that had for the most part been washed down and, on the wooden floors, been sanded away. The wireless radio is still on the table, although it's now in pieces.

Upstairs, off the landing, are four rooms. One is a bathroom, the other two are bedrooms. One of the bedrooms has been converted into a separate storeroom that Phoibe opens with another key. This is where much of their finds have been stored.

Things found here.

- A box of **dynamite**. Some sticks appear to be missing (these were the sticks that James Templeton used to blow open the gates of Arima).
- Various personal belongings in the two bedrooms that the team shared as sleeping areas.

The Ambrosial Cup

The *Ambrosial Cup* is a bar and board.

Three stories. First floor is a bar and coffee area, with tables that overflow into the street so that customers might sit outside and enjoy the weather when it isn't raining. Large fireplace inside. The bar is tended by the cranky **Priam Georgallis**, and the food is cooked by **Solon** (who has an incredible handle-bar mustache) and his wife **Hypatia**.

The Police Station

The police station is close to the quay, although calling it a police station is a slight misnomer. It is more of an outpost, a room with a desk and a single lockup cell out back, and a small bathroom off to its side.

The Hellenic Police Department have two full time employees, **Adrastos Doukakis** and **Lysander Zorbas**. They are only in the office during the day: at night, they close up, and one must find them in their respective homes in Magnisias. If anyone is locked up, they spend the night in the cell, alone.

The department does have a small cache of weapons in a locker against the wall. The locker is locked, but Adrastos and Lysander both have keys to it.

- **A shotgun** and two boxes of 12 shells. Damage: 1d+1. Gives a +3 bonus to gun skill.

- **Two rifles**, and four boxes of 10 bullets. Damage: 4d
- **Two pairs of handcuffs**, with respective keys.

The Outlying Areas

The area just above the town is mostly plateau, and is made up mostly of farms, fields, a mill, dirt roads and paths, and abandoned huts. Of special note is an abandoned quarry, which is described in detail, below.

The Acropolis

At the island's center is the Acropolis of Achlys. This old Greek settlement was **built on a hill**, and commands a good view of the surrounding countryside. The countryside here is most more abandoned: there are few herdsman, and even fewer farmers. The island residents mostly avoid the ruins because of fears that they are haunted. The recent events, of course, have kept people even further away. This is a good place for strange things to happen and not be noticed by the residents of the island.

There is a **single main road** leading up the hill: this is cobbled, but years of decay means that small plants and bushes are pushing their way up between the stones. The road winds up the hillside, until it enters the main body of the ruins. **Most of the buildings have in part collapsed**, or consist of a few **standing walls** and **no roof**. Floors of multi-story buildings may also be mostly missing, and rubble is collected in various locations: what this rubble once was is hard to say.

At the center of Achlys is the **agora**, a large open space that was the political and social heart of the town in ages past. The flag stones, while loose and occasionally pushed up, are in a far better state than those of the road coming into Achlys.

Two things stand in the center: **a tree**, which has pushed its way up through the flagstones, and a **large tent**. Some of the ties holding the tent down have come loose, and the canvas has been punctured with many bullet holes.

Beside the agora are the private grounds of the **Oracle of Echidna**. The oracle is mostly a collection of standing walls, missing floors, and chipped statues of serpentine Echidna. But as soon as one steps inside, the evidence of an abandoned archaeological dig remains.

This is all described in more detail, below.

Forward Camp at the Agora

This is a large, open area. A **single tree** has forced its way out between the flagstones, and the team has their forward camp set up here. **The tent** is a large, multi-person canvas tent, although it's seen better days: someone has shot multiple holes into or out of it, and some pins have come loose causing the far side of the tent to flap.

The interior of the tent has been turned inside out. The sleeping bags and ground mats have been thrown around, as has the teams belongings. The canvas interior has been stained brown with blood.

- A small wooden crate contains a collection of **tiny bones**, although many of them have been thrown out the box. An archeology (-3) or a biology check informs you that these are the bones of hedgehogs, cats and dogs. They have clearly been gnawed upon. Some have even been cracked open for access to the marrow, which not many predators do. A biology (+1) informs you that this is probably a large carnivore, although what carnivore did this you cannot say, since Kleitos island is not known for any. Successful archeology or biology rolls indicate that there was no signs of tool use: this was probably not done by humans.
- A single **handie-talkie**, which looks like surplus from the war. It's not clear where the other transceiver is (it is at the Oracle).
- A **hurricane lantern**, and a **half empty tin of kerosene**, both under a collection of damp blankets.
- **Shovels** and **picks**, a **bucket** that has a small hole in it.
- **Various items that the players might inquire about, and you feel is appropriate.**

In the agora there's a **stone well**. It goes down far, into darkness, although when the light is right, you can see water at the bottom. There is no simple way to get down the well. A perception (-1) roll will let people detect the faint scent of foulness in the air about the well. If players contrive to get water out of it, the water is foul, and thick with tendrils of slime and unknown growth (see *Optional Scene: Drinking the Well Water*).

The Oracle of Echidna

See the *Optional Scene: Staying the Night at the Agora (or Oracle)*.

Like most of the other buildings throughout the Acropolis, the Oracle is in ruins. This was once a tall, three story, domed building. The outer entrance and its façade are still standing, as is the east wall, but the other walls and façades have mostly collapsed. The columns around the entrance still stand, but the doors are missing. The roof and floors have, in some age long past, collapsed. The building is a hollow shell, open to the sky and the elements.

Much of the stone tiling has been lost, and is now grass and dirt. What was individual rooms and what was separate buildings is not immediately clear, although the very bases of many walls still stand as low running impediments.

Inside the chipped and stained walls are the remains of the team's excavations, including a large string grid that have been set up to mark square yards, and between which people have been digging.

The players can easily recognize this as the possible Oracle, since most of the excavation work at the Acropolis is focused here. The few existing walls also contain carvings of the various monsters that are Echidna's children.

At the far end of the grass patch that was once the "main hall" stands a weather worn **marble alter**, decorated, strangely, not with carvings of Echidna, but with what seems to be carvings of a woman. Giles will recognize her as Nyx. The alter is the same one from Prof. Giles's dreams: it is hollow, although there is no obvious opening. Giles must break this stone alter open, making a successful strength check while using something like a pick, or a hammer. Inside is the **Amulet of Night**. As soon as Prof Giles touches the amulet, they have a waking vision: calling upon the powers of the amulet will bring in a large swarm of Nyx's children, bats. Giles may now indeed call upon this power, once a week. Whether they are in an enclosed space or not, bats will appear, either flying in through openings, or crawling out from under spaces in which no one is looking. Because Giles may only use this once a week, they will likely only be able to use this amulet once during play.

Behind the alter, excavation has dug away at rubble and discovered an underground room. This is **the tomb**. It's dark inside and lights of some kind will be needed.

The hole descends into a central, rectangular chamber. The players will have to find some way to climb down, although it certainly is possible to jump on a successful dexterity or related roll, otherwise some damage will occur.

The hall is pitch black except for light coming in through the hole. The floor is made of flagstone, and the walls themselves are dressed stone. Archways lead into three rooms, two on either of the longer sides of rectangular chamber and one at the end. The **walls are decorated** with carvings of two large people sitting on chairs, watching people standing in a river. Successful history rolls will inform the players that it is Hades and Persephone, watching over the dead, who bathe in the river of forgetfulness, Lethe.

The two on the longer sides contain urns of ashes, arrayed neatly on shelves cut into the rock. These were once burial chambers.

At room at the far end of the chamber is also small; this is where the corpse was discovered. The corpse, however, has been exhumed: the grave is empty. A successful archeology check will inform the group that the body was taken out roughly, with what appears to be a pick axe and shovel.

In the upper levels of the Oracle, the team may find:

- A single **handie-talkie**, which looks like surplus from the war. It's not clear where the other transceiver is (it is at the team's tent). It's resting, knocked over, by the theodolite.
- A **theodolite**, standing on its tripod. It can be used to calculate angles between objects and determine something's position fairly exactly, using an archeology (-2) roll.
- A **level**, which can be used to determine height differences between two spots, using an archeology (-2) roll.
- The **excavation nets**: the boxes beneath them contain fine dirt. Anything that was once in the nets have long since been removed.

Note: if the players question you about how the scene looks, and what they ask sounds reasonable, say yes to them. Incorporate and improvise!

The Quarry

Much of the buildings and the roads have been made from rock, and there are various quarries used throughout the island, although usually when someone speaks colloquially about "the quarry", they mean a particular abandoned quarry that has a bad reputation on the island.

This is a large quarry about an hour walk out of the village, along a dirt road and past farmlands and vineyards. The quarry itself has been cut into a limestone mound: the

easiest entrance is through a tunnel two yards in diameter, which opens into a large pit. The walls are steep, and this quarry has not been actively used in years. The inner portion has flooded with water, and forms a rather deep, dark and still lake.

The corpses of the previous team (all but Templeton's) have been waited with rocks and sunk to the bottom of this lake. A health check is need to test if someone may hold their breath long enough to reach the corpses, otherwise they're forced to turn back for air.

Old Cottage: The Home of the Ward or Arima

This is place is home to three things of importance to the players:

- the **Ward of Arima**, itself, operates from this cottage.
- The **Ward's library**, which is a dark library, full of old occult texts, and a *Latin* copy of the Book of the Dead (note: *Wrona does not speak Latin, but Giles does*).
- The **creature corpses**, which have been removed from the Oracle and brought here.

This is a small building, made of plastered stone with a tiled roof, that sits beside **Artemis Lake** about an hour out of town. It has two floors, the top floor being a collection of five bedrooms, two bathrooms, and the library. The bottom floor is made up of a large kitchen, pantry, scullery, living room, and a study.

The **library** on the top floor is always guarded by a member of the Ward. The guard is tasked to study, and so remains inside the library, nominally reading. The guard is present, even at night. The books in the library are all occult books, including such famous books as Cornelius Agrippa's, *Three Books of Occult Philosophy*, and the other neo-platonists, all of Plato's work and the other surviving works of the Greek philosophers. Here, in the library, is a surviving translation of the dread book Al Azif, translated as the **Book of the Dead**. This copy is in Latin, although Wrona will recognize the title.

- The Eater in the Night
- Magical Patterns and their Meaning
- Scent of the Blue Rose

Table 2: Possible Book Names

The **living room** downstairs has various statues depicting Echidna's acts of cannibalism upon Gaia, but is otherwise sparsely decorated.

The **kitchen** and **pantry** have an array of raw meats hanging from the rafters, curing. This is, of course, meat that is eaten raw, in celebration of Echidna.

The master bedroom, is the largest of the upstairs bedrooms, and takes up the western portion of the floor. **Krino** and **Irene Tzanavars** share this room. The other rooms are for honored guests of the Ward.

A nearby barn-house has been re-purposed as a small **chapel to Echidna**. The dirt floor has been plastered over, and tapestries showing the acts of Echidna have been draped along the walls. The corpses have been placed on display at the stone alter at the front of the chapel. The loft area of the barn is a dormitory filled with double bunks for those members of the Ward who there are no space for in the main cottage. Stored behind the tapestries are large iron racks to which people can be strapped with leather straps.

There are always members of the Ward here. People you may find include:

- Old **Krino Tzanavars**, 90 years old, who is the spiritual figurehead of the Ward. He says that in her slumber, Echidna speaks to him. It is because of visions sent to him that the Ward became suspicious of Templeton. Krino and his wife, Irene, share the master bedroom upstairs.
- **Irene Tzanavars**, Krino's 70 year old wife, is the librarian, and keeper of the books. If the door were to be locked, she would have the key. Irene and her husband, Krino, share the master bedroom upstairs.

The Gate

The gateway stands open. It is a cave at the island's north end, on the cliff-side facing the sea. The only way to reach it is to take hike a precarious path, now overgrown from use, down the side to the cave which begins half-way up the cliff, so that it is sheltered from tides.

The path has recently seen a lot of traffic (survival check). The gate at the bottom is hidden from the cliff-edge by an overhang, hiding a space of a few meters to stand on. The gateway is large: four people could stand abreast, two people high. The door-frame is of dressed stone that merges neatly with the raw rock, while the door itself has been blasted from its hinges, and lay in chunks. A warm, stale, fetid breeze, breeze blows out of the cavity. The path is worn, and leads downwards into darkness.

The gate is guarded by *three* guards, one keeping watch on the cliff top, from a tent set up for his comfort. Two or down at the gate.

- The blast is fairly recent. An archeology (-2) check, or geology check, will inform you that the stone is still rough, and hasn't been weathered by exposure.
- There is a dark brown stain here: a biology check tells you that this is dried blood. (this is the blood of the guard that Templeton killed in order to gain access to the gate.)

Arima

Beyond the gateway lies Arima, Echidna's home. To reach it, one must pass down a long tunnel into the darkness. This tunnel will seem infinite, unless a ritual is used to open the gateway. Such a ritual exists in the Book of the Dead, and can be found, for instance, in the Latin copy at the Old Cottage. Wrona will likely figure this out fairly quickly from their knowledge of the book.

At the end of the passageway is a slumbering city: stone buildings carved out of the rock inside a giant, bathed in darkness. The only light that the players will detect comes from the distance, and this will be a fire that Templeton keeps building at Echidna's throne.

The throne is at the heart of this empty, abandoned, sleeping city.

The players will often hear things slithering in the darkness, and might sometimes catch movement. There is, occasionally, the sound of a rattle, or a hiss.

Everything is cold and dank, stalagmites and stalactites abound, and in the silence there is the sound of dripping water.

Characters and Other Entities

Here is a description of some important characters and other entities found in this tale.

Dr. James Templeton

James is an archaeologist who, a few years ago, discovered a copy of the Necronomicon in an Italian monastery that he was examining. Reading the book, and discovering its history, began a passion in him to locate an original, Arabic copy of the book.

The Ward of Arima

This is an ancient institution that have focused themselves on the preservation of **Al Azif**, the original Book of the Dead, of which they have a copy. At some time in the past, their occult practices had led them to discover the resting place of the God Echidna, a terrible serpentine nymph who had, along with her consort, Typhon, terrorized the world and threatened it with destruction.

The Ward began to shift its focus from a book which could summon Gods, to this terrible being that began to haunt their dreams. Using the book they were able to communicate with the now drowsy Echidna, and discovered the gateway to her abode, Arima.

The Ward made their home on the island, in a time when the Oracle was beginning to see its decline. They took the book and placed it in Arima in order to do a number of things: protect the book from the world, who coveted it; to show Echidna the reverence in which they held her; to protect the world from the book, and the power that summoning the dark Gods provides.

Over the years, and without the Book, the Ward lost their ability to easily pass through the gate, and so we find them now, inept and sluggish protectors of dangerous things.

The Book of the Dead

An infamous book on occult practices, specifically discussing methods for opening gateways to the gods. *Al Azif* is the Arabic term for the nocturnal sound made by insect that is often mistaken for the howling of demons and jinn. This has been translated

into Greek and Latin as the Book of the Dead, or the Necronomicon. The original Arabic text is no longer extant, but quotations do exist in the works of various authors. Few copies of the Greek and Latin are to be found, and the handful that exist are closely guarded by their owners. Reading the book is thought to drive one slowly insane.

This book can be used to not only open the gateway to Arima, but if anyone thinks to ask about Tartarus, and so, it may be used to open gateways into this dark pit as well. This is, of course, what Echidna will do, once awakened.

Echidna

Echidna is the god on whom the Oracle was focused, and whom the Ward worship.

Having a reptilian, serpentine aspect, Echidna may be a drakaina, and her name means “She Viper”. She is also called the *mother of all monsters*, because her children include Cerebrus, the Chimera, the Hydra, the Gorgons, and others. Her consort is Typhon, and when Zeus overthrew him and banished him into the depths of Tartarus, he allowed Echidna to live as a challenge to future heroes, allowing her to keep her home in underground Arima.

Over the centuries, she (as have all the gods) has entered a deep slumber. If she were to be awakened and locate the Book, she would use the Book to open Tartarus, the deep pit beneath the Earth in which the most dangerous monsters are imprisoned. Here lay the Titans, captive, and her consort, Typhon, who challenged Zeus and defeated him, and nearly destroyed the World.

Merely awakening Echidna would be a terrible thing — if she were to obtain the book, disaster would befall the Earth.

The Lamia / Drakaina

No stats are provided for these creatures, although using an average of 13 is likely to provide an interesting encounter in hand to hand combat. Guns will still likely make quick work of the creature, unfortunately, unless you find a way to quickly neutralise the weapon. One example of how to do this is to have the lamia use her tail to trip the person who is holding the gun, perhaps even wrapping herself around them, strangling them, while she continues to fight with the others.

Fist damage: 1d+1

Biting damage: 1d

Poison: Leaves the player highly confused and disoriented. Lose a turn.

Prophecies

Once a day, when sleeping, Giles can ask for a prophecy. Say something dark and gloomy related to the storyline. Here are some options (the parenthetical statements are not to be given to the player, but are guides and suggestions to the DM. **Note that during the trip to Kleitos, their prophetic visions are of being trapped underground, in darkness, with a heavy weight pressing down on them.**

- You are under water. It is dark, even though you can see the sky through the water's verge above you, and what looks like the surrounding lip of rock. You are floating amongst bodies, three of them, their mouths open, their flesh consumed. *(These are the corpses of the team, dumped in the lake at the Quarry. Queries as to bodies of water will probably have people mention the quarry.)*
- You can see nothing, not because you are blind, but because you are dark. But you can hear something, someone, crawling. They're breathing heavily, trying to reach something, something they have wanted for a long time. You understand that their excitement should be your fear. *(This is, of course, Templeton, who has forced his way through the gateway and is attempting to make his way into Arima.)*
- The streets are quiet, but something slithers through it. A snake is coming, hunting you; it can smell your scent on the wind, and it hungers. *(This is an image of a drakaina hunting through the streets, searching for children to take off into the darkness and devour.)*
- You see Singh, Bowen and Wrona strapped down, screaming: people kneel over them, eating them. This is a sacred moment. *(This is what may happen to our heroes if they are captured by the Ward and cannot escape.)*
- You are floating above Kleitos island. You can see the ruins, you can see Magnisias, and the fishing boats out at sea. And then everything begins to shake; a great rumbling fills the air, and slowly the ruins begin to collapse downwards, into a great sinkhole opening in the ground. The water thrashes, waves reach up and flood into the streets of Magnisias. The sink hole widens, the collapse of the ruins does not stop, but more land is consumed, faster, faster, the farmlands are now gone, the vineyards, the edges of Magnisias,

Magnisias itself. Water tumbles in and fills the hole. What is left is only sea.
(This is what may happen if Templeton awakens Typhon using Al Azif.)

A Collection of Greek Names

You might find this useful for coming up with random characters that fit the setting.

Male	Female
Andreas	Arcadia
Apollo	Aritha
Cleon	Cliantha
Ioannes	Halia
Markos	Hibiscus
Priam	Melanthia
Talos	Philippa
Theano	Platona
Vasilios	Psyche
Zino	Thera

Surnames: Dimas, Zorbas, Xarhakos, Koteas, Kanellis, Manatos, Mitsotakis, Papadopoulos.

Glossary

Acropolis — An ancient Greek city built on a hill. *Acro* = edge/extremity, *polis* = city. The hilltop position was a defensive position, and the defining attribute of an acropolis.

Agora — an open-space, public meeting area. This was the heart of an ancient Greek town, where athletics, politics, philosophy, and so on, was carried out. The term agoraphobia (fear of open spaces) comes from this term.

Al Azif — The title is the Arabic term for the nocturnal sound made by insect that is often mistaken for the howling of demons and jinn. This has been translated into Greek and Latin as the Book of the Dead, or the Necronomicon. The original Arabic text is no longer extant, but quotations do exist in the works of various authors. Few copies of the Greek and Latin are to be found, and the handful that exist are closely guarded by their owners. Reading the book is thought to drive one slowly insane.

Ambrosia — A rosy-red nectar, the food of the gods. It is able to make those who eat it immortal, and is brought to Olympus by a flock of doves.

Book of the Dead — See Al Azif.

Chthonic — meaning under, or beneath the Earth / Gaia. It is a term used to represent the gods of the underworld, such as Hades, Persephone and Tartarus.

Drakaina — Female dragons, but usually somewhat human like. For instance, they may be human from the waist up, serpent from the waist down. Sometimes they may appear completely human (such as Python), or completely reptilian. Echidna may be a drakaina.

Echidna — Having a reptilian, serpentine aspect, Echidna may be a drakaina, and her name means “She Viper”. She is also called the *mother of all monsters*, because her children include Cerebrus, the Chimera, the Hydra, the Gorgons, and others. Her consort is Typhon, and when Zeus overthrew him and banished him into the depths of Tartarus, he allowed Echidna to live as a challenge to future heroes, allowing her to keep her home in underground Arima.

Lamia — Child eating demons, in the form of women with a snake’s body. These are sometimes thought to be the same as the drakaina. The first lamia was the beautiful

queen of Libya, who became a child eating demon, while the snake-like form is attributed to John Keats, and his poem, *Lamia*.

Nyx — Nyx is the god of the night, born from Chaos and mother to many other personified gods, such as Morpheus (Dream), Nemesis (Retribution), and Eris (Strife). She does not have many cults focused on her, and apart from Achlys, the only other known oracle for her is the acropolis at Megara, although this is only known from reports in antiquity, and has not been discovered. She often appears in cults of other gods focused on that god's relationship with the night. When she does appear in mythology, she is generally a powerful figure — but like her representation in the mystery cults, she is a shadowy figure, as suits her personification. Her siblings are Erebus, Gaia, Tartarus and Eros.

Tartarus — from Greek Mythology. Tartarus is both a place and a deity, in the mystery schools it was the unbounded first-entity from which Light and the cosmos was born. As a place, it is beneath the sky (Uranus), the Earth (Gaia), the Sea (Pontus) and the Underworld. It is a dark place of torment to which unwanted individuals were discarded, including the Titans (after being overthrown by Zeus), those of the Underworld who failed judgment and needed to be punished (as described by Plato, for example, in his dialogue Gorgias), and the ugly misshapen children of Gaia and Uranus, such as the hundred handed ones, the Cyclops, and giants.

Hesiod informs us that a bronze anvil, dropped from Gaia, would take nine days to fall all the way to Tartarus. Zeus, in the Iliad, says that Tartarus is as far from Hades as Gaia is from the heavens. `

Typhon — Is the most dangerous “monster” in Greek mythology. He is the son of Gaia and Tartarus, and attempts to destroy Zeus. During their first fight, Tartarus wins their first fight, but Zeus is healed by Hermes. Zeus defeats Typhon, and imprisons him with the Titans and other monsters in the depths of his father, Tartarus.